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J. C. CLOPPER'S JOURNAL AND BOOK OF MEMORANDA FOR 1828.¹

PROVINCE OF TEXAS.

Novr. 10th 1827—Departed Cincinnati on this evening on board the Steam boat Franklin for Louisville—Company for the same destination Messrs. N. Clopper, A. M. Clopper, E. N. Clopper Captn. Lyndsay—for this night's darksome series of conflicting emotions; why the spirit slumbered not, and the heart was ill at ease, vide: the records of Memory.

Nov. 11th. Sunday morning arrived at Louisville; Met Dr. G M Patrick and Mr. Gregg of Ky: who connected themselves with us under the firm of the Texas trading Association Remained here three days awaiting the departure of a steam boat—pleased with the Town's commercial appearance the picturesque wildness and grandeur of the falls and spirit of enterprize discoverable in the progress of the canal around them—wrote four letters—three to Cincinnati—two of which remain not at Woodlawn of the Mound.

Nov. 14 This morning departed for N. Orleans on board the splendid Boat Amazon—our Compy. seven in all—Had a delightful passage down as far as St Helena on the Mississippi where the

¹The original of this journal is in the possession of Edward N. Clopper, Cincinnati, a grandson of J. C. Clopper, who has kindly furnished the printer's copy, at the same time lending the original for editorial purposes and sending also the following sketch of its writer:

"Joseph Chambers Clopper was born in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, January 11, 1802, and died in Cincinnati, on January 7, 1861. His parents, Nicholas Clopper of New Jersey, and Rebecca Chambers of Chambersburg, were married in 1790 and had eight children, all of whom, except Joseph, died single. In 1829 he married Mary Este of Morristown, New Jersey, whose sister Hannah was the wife of David G. Burnet. Three children were born to them, two of whom died in infancy; their son, Edward N. Clopper, was superintendent of schools in Houston, Texas, at the time of his death in 1880. In 1818 Nicholas Clopper took his wife and children to Cincinnati, where he purchased land and built a house which is still the family homestead. A few years later he acquired land in Texas for speculation and ranching purposes, and spent considerable time in the province looking after his property. In 1827 he took his sons, Joseph, Andrew and Edward, with him to Texas, the following diary, kept by Joseph, being an account of their experiences during that visit.—E. N. C."

boat broke her shaft—the border and island scenery of the different rivers and streams generally undiversified, occasionally picturesque and beautiful. At the last named place were taken in tow by the *La Fayette* with a keel lashed to her opposite side—presenting such a wide front to the waters our progress was very slow affording sufficient time for the eye to delight itself with the prospective loveliness of the border country which increases in interest as we approached the great Southern depot—reached the City on the 28th instant.

Purchased a large flat as a Depository for our freight and boarding house—father's residence at the Western Hotel—first night's supper oysters and oyster soup. A vast number of shipping in port—say three hundred sail, from most of the principal commercial countries. City stands on a flat plane secured from inundation by the river by a levee of sand and shells extending many miles up and down the river continually kept in repair within the corporation by hirelings slaves and criminals—streets unseemly and inconveniently narrow tho' mostly laid off at right angles—there are several streets of handsome breadth ornamented with trees and some fine brick buildings—tho' the greater part of the City is constituted of frame and these mostly very low houses about one and a half story. The public square fronting the river with the Cathedral at its rear presents a very beautiful view rendered more picturesque as the building externally has much the stamp of antiquity awakening the eye of the mind to rest upon the time-stricken ruins of a castle of romance. There are many handsome public buildings such as the new theatre, exchange the several banks etc. Population variant according to the periodical seasons when health or sickness most prevails—supposed in all migratory and stationary “from snowy white to sooty” to be between 40 and fifty thousand souls at this time, composed apparently of all tongues and kindred and people. The French language still prevails tho' the Americans (as in contradistinction those citizens who speak the English tongue are termed) are fast gaining the ascendancy in manners customs style and the general character of a city or people.

New Orleans has a small artificial basin on the west side connected with Lake Pontchartrain by a canal which will admit coasting vessels freighting one hundred tons. The Sabbath is dis-

tinguished more as a day of amusements balls dances excellence and variety of the markets than as a day of sanctity and rest—very few stores are closed and drays and carts run without intermission. The French soldiery attend mass in the morning in full uniform and the rest of the day in parading and exercise at the guns. Walked down with three or four of our Compy to the battle ground—five miles below the corporation—charmed with the elegance of taste displayed by gentlemen residents at their different mansions on the river—the eye rests with rapture on the beautiful groves and hedges of the orange tree in its survey of the fascinating scenery enriched by the profuse variety of fruits and shrubbery skilfully arranged and intermingled one with the other—reached the field of carnage—now covered with stalks of sugar cane and corn—the plane is here about one mile in breadth perfectly level and widening with the course of the river—the only vestige of that day's glorious triumph of *Freedom* is the intrenchment extending from the shore of the Mississippi to an impassable swamp; being about one mile in length—this trench is about 10 or 12 feet in width by 4 or 5 in depth, in many places nearly filled—here then I stood and silently surveyed the scene for this was a *wide field* for meditation—at this point the gallant foe was found in heaps of slain—here “blood burst and smoked around”—here the cries and groans of the wounded and expiring were heard “as when a thousand ghosts shriek at once upon the hollow wind”—there the British chieftan fell and yonder stand the two lonely trees where his remains were embalmed as a sad solace for the afflictions of kindred spirits in a foreign land—at a distance of one hundred and fifty yards in the rear of the intrenchment is the beautiful seat when whence genl. Jackson viewed the battle raging, a spectator of the deeds of arms while Fame was weaving around his brow a chaplet of immortality too dazzling alas! for the visions of thousands boasting themselves discerners of the intrinsic merits of man—when shall we be able to discriminate and know that “it is not all gold that glitters”? that there are things apparently all glorious in themselves that shine but with a borrowed lustre—light that is not their own.

Returned. Were detained in Orleans much longer than we anticipated—often disappointed in our prospects of leaving a City with which we had already become most heartily disgusted—some

of us continually presenting to others the infectious mien of dejected *Ennui*. To remove this made several visits to Miss C. W. an interesting and intelligent young lady with whom I became acquainted in Cin: a few years previous these visits were too ineffectual for frequent repetition—the eye—the ear—the taste for intellectual elegancies were agreeably entertained and delighted but ah! the Memory was but too much awakened and the heart grew sick—obtained some handsome specimens of this Lady's penmanship and poetic taste for my sister. Wrote six letters—four for Cin:—Query—Woodlawn of the Mound, hast thou *still* with thee more than an equal division?

Dec: 18th The Compy purchase three eighths of a small schooner the Little Zoe—burden 20 tons—20th. Cargo on board and Custom House clearance procured—spirits once more light and buoyant 22nd Saturday evening 5 o'clock—passengers all on board—"This hour we part—this hour our flutt'ring sails Spread their white bosoms to the gentle gales"—the breezes slowly die away—the spirits sink. Land of my love! how lone am I! Friends of my heart! how lost! As a Gondola that scarcely *wakes the tide* our little bark moves gently on toward her destined port—not so with the mind—the movements of its thoughts are retrograde and screened by a veil of "leaden gloom," far beyond lies the beautiful scenery on the constituent loveliness of which it delights to dwell and revel and feast upon the sweets of pensive retrospect—the stars are in brilliant glow—the wind from the N West grows high—about 11 o'clock at night under full sail the vessel strikes the shore where we are obliged to lie all night in great peril of our vessel as she lay in a whirlpool of the river recieving against her side huge logs and trees borne on a current of unusual rapidity. In the morning the crew and passengers fourteen men in all succeed in getting her off. Sunday—have pretty favourable breezes—scenery—nothing imposing, a flat prairie and swamp country on both sides—gratified with the majestic and beautiful appearances of many large vessels bearing for N Orleans under full press of canvass. Land to take in wood for our voyage—tormented almost to madness by swarms of sand flies—a Small insect or gnat more intolerable much than the musquito. This night strike the shore again a little below Fort Jackson; get off without damage cast anchor within sound of the roaring of the Sea. Monday morning

the sun unclouded rises and a bland breeze from the west promises us a delightful entrance into the "vasty deep"—ascend the mast head—the ocean is seen on both sides the river—the land appearing as two great artificial banks or levees thrown up as barriers against the "meeting of the waters"—reach the Balize—river of great breadth—the eye is lost in its survey of extensive alluvial flats and watery surfaces—enter the S. West pass—most of the morning at the mast head charmed with the boundless and novel prospect—anxious for the moment when we should launch upon the broad bosom of the sea—met by a pilot boat are conducted through the nine feet pass at 12 o'clock, delightfully wafted away on the gently undulating billows of the ocean amidst the smiles of the elements and sportive exhibitions of innumerable porpoises. The Mississippi waters distinguishable for fifteen or twenty miles at sea. Mr. Gregg is very sick ere the land is out of view. Water has now a beautiful sea-green hue. Monday evening—out of soundings—the sea is now of the deepest indigo—the swells increase and billows roll confusedly as tho' there was an angry commotion at their unfathomable depths—the evening is yet without a moon and the stars twinkle and beam a soft and lovely lustre—a lively southern breeze springs up—our little bark glides swiftly o'er the waves—leaving apparently a fiery stream behind—this was to us a beautiful phenomenon—the vessel seemed to have stirred up myriads of animalcula that glowed in her wake as so many "sparks from smitten steel or nitrous grain the blaze"—the sea at this distance from shore is of the liveliest and deepest cerulean hue. Christmas day very heavy rain in the morning for several hours—exposed to it all. Mr. Gregg and W. sick and vomiting as for a wager. Sea pretty heavy—undulatory motion of the vessel very quick and sickening. Father commences a course of severe vomitings—a large brig heaves in sight all sail set and coming fast upon us—begin to talk of powder lead guns and pirates. Brig nears us—hoists signal for us to come to—do so—find that she was a fine brig sixteen days from N. York bound to some point on Vermilion Bay with materials for the establishment of a Light-House. Capt'n apologises for our detention and sails off—clouds are dispersed and sun again appears—sea still running high—feel somewhat unpleasant myself as did the whole Compy—but none so bad as to vomit saving those above mentioned—have

no appetite for anything Looking at poor Gregg upon whose forlorn dejected countenance a smile had not dared to appear since his first greetings with the ocean. Strove all of us to rally each other on the comparative excellencies of this Christmas day's amusements pleasures and social happiness with the fair—saw some sea-fowl that seemed to have been driven off by the stormy winds—another unpleasant night is laboured through—sail on all Wednesday without any remarkable occurrence—saw some large trees which we determined should be and saluted them as old neighbours from the forests of Ohio and Kentucky—they were driving along with a fine breeze and strong current towards the shores of Texas tho' too tardily for us and we were again without a neighbour—our dogs three in number all sick and refuse to eat—but fight continually from pure *peevishness*.

Thursday morning feel a return of appetite feel a freshness in the breeze—the sea is of a green cast—about 9 o'clock the joyful cry of land is echoed round the deck strain the eye and discern the breakers at the shore—great flocks of geese and ducks fly over us—think it to be Galveston island—coast along within sight—while sitting at breakfast a sudden squall of wind and heavy rain take us and turn over dishes and drench the whole of us—thought once we should capsizes ere the sailors could furl sails wind lulls in about an hour and rain ceased—clouds and fog disperse and we have a beautiful afternoon. Still in sight of land—come to an anchor early in the evening in 10 fathom water powerful current running parallel with the land. Saw the sun as he appeared in the act of engulfing himself—shortly after the lovely star of evening gracefully descended the horizon after him and bathed her golden locks in the western tides; “whilst high amidst her silent orb the silver moon rolled clear”—the breeze was bland and the surface of the waters unruffled—there was a magnificence in this scenery, an imposing grandeur that seemed to rivet the soul and interest it to exercise all its faculties in contemplation of Him who arrayed them in all their splendour and gave to each his mighty energies—there was a correspondent calmness on the mind—all was quietude—the Capt'n had gone to his repose when about 9 o'clock the wind suddenly rose the Capt'n. was called and told the wind was favourable for sailing. The anchor is weighed—the sails set and we scud away—in about 15 minutes encounter a

severe gale from the N. West—the sea becomes fearfully tumultuous—gale increases—topsail is furled and sails reefed—billows rolling to a prodigious height—vessel lying on her side and riding majestically over towering waves—a dutch passenger's hat and bible blown away he fastens himself to the ropes—we are all stretched across the deck—water dashes over upon us from bow to stern—suffer greatly from the cold—gale continues till morning—high winds till late in the day—find that we are blown off about 20 miles from the coast—discover smoke in several directions—supposed to be from the fires of Indian hunters—wind still from the land—beat up and down the coast till the evening of the next day when we discover the mouth of the pass leading into Galveston bay between the eastern point of Galveston island and Point Bolivar—after striking on the bar discover the channel leading into the harbour of the celebrated La Fitte this is a deep and commodious harbour perfectly secure from any wind having good anchorage—not knowing the channel we ran into a sand bank under full sail, next morning found that our vessel was on her side with not more than 18 inches water. Saturday evening four or five of us went ashore with our guns and lay till morning on the soft grass—not knowing that it was Sunday we rambled about shooting at geese ducks and other waterfowl of the country—which collect here in innumerable multitudes every morning to feed on marine substances that are left on the beach by the tide Shot some fine large red fish which with our fowl and oysters afforded our craving appetites a banquet that was most exquisitely delicious and savoury—not able to get our vessel off to day go on shore again in the evening—kindle a large fire of drift wood—none growing upon this point of the island—step a little distance to a small bayou where we gather loads of oysters—roast them and feast till feasting is a labour and we are invited to repose by “tired Nature: sweet restorer—balmy sleep.” Monday morning see deer on the island—out shooting again—in the evening at flood tide succeed in hauling out into deep water—lay at anchor till tuesday morning—favourable breeze from the South hoist Sail and pursue the western channel running on the left of Pelican island, so called from the vast number of that species of bird that are continually seen on and about it—sailed many miles through water of five feet depth our schooner drawing upward of four and

a half—saw the wreck of the Rising-suns—lost when father was in this country last—discover the western pass leading into the ocean. Galveston island is about 30 or 40 miles in length varying from one to five in breadth and makes a fine hunting ground for several small tribes of Indians—anchor for the night in seven feet water—not much timber yet to be seen on the land—come in sight of the wreck of the Mary a schooner of 100 tons burthen lost three years since on Red fish bar—a dry shoal of sand pebbles and shells reaching from one shore at Davis' point to the other fifteen or twenty miles in length and forming the dividing line between what are termed Galveston and Trinity Bays. This Bar is about twenty five miles from Point Bolívar—it has several channels connecting the Bays the principal of which is about one mile from Davis' point having five fathom water immediately in the channel and a hard bar or shoal directly after passing through; upon which we struck in four and half feet water and dragged over into the Trinity considered the safest and handsomest Bay on all the coast—discover Cedar Point directly ahead it being about four or five miles to the right of the mouth of the rio San Jacinto for which we were Steering anchored for the night about two miles off the mouth in 8 feet water. In the morning are visited by three men in a small boat—one of them (major Taylor) an acquaintance of father—get favourable news—are piloted by them into the San Jacinto—strike on a bar at the entrance—haul off and anchor for the night—go ashore on father's league known by the name of Hunter's Point—a lovely spot of land surrounded by a beautifully picturesque scenery decorated with groves of cedar pine magnolia etc. presenting a perpetual view of evergreen scenery and considered one of the handsomest situations in all the Colony. The bay on one side—the meandering San Jacinto or sacred hyacinth on another the back of it prairie and timber standing in bodies and clusters like small islands of green upon the broad waste of ocean—at this season the surface of the waters are enlivened with vast shoals of water fowl from the majestic swan to the smallest fowl of that class—are amused and gratified in viewing them in their airy circles and graceful movements on the streams. Shoot a number of different kinds which make dainty dishes for our spare tables—get a pilot and sail up this beautiful stream ten miles where we enter the mouth of Buffalo bayou—

this is the most remarkable stream I have ever seen—at its junction with the San Jacinto is about 150 yds in breadth having about three fathoms water with little variation in depth as high up as Harrisburg—20 miles—the ebbing and flowing of the tide is observable about 12 miles higher the water being of navigable depth close up to each bank giving to this most enchanting little stream the appearance of an artificial canal in the design and course of which Nature has lent her masterly hand; for its meanderings and beautiful curvatures seem to have been directed by a taste far too exquisite for human attainment—most of its course is bound in by timber and flowering shrubbery which overhang its grassy banks and dip and reflect their variegated hues in its unruffled waters these impending shrubs are in places overtopped by the evergreen magnolia rising in the grandeur of its excellence to the reach of deserved pre-eminence where it unfolds its far-scented magnificence; softening to the eye of admiration the dazzling lustre of its expansive bloom by agreeable blendings with the deep sea-green of its umbrageous foliage—the banks of this stream are secured from the lavings of the water by, what are here termed “cypress knees”—these are apparently exuberances of cypress roots and shoot up along the margin of the waters to the height of three and four feet and from 3 to 10 inches in diameter without leaf or branch; and so closely and regularly are they often found standing in lines as to resemble piles driven in purposely as security against the innovation of the tides—often along these shady banks have I rowed my little skiff and wondered if ever some Bard had consecrated its border shades by a correspondent flow of song—if some native Ossian had ever breathed forth in his artless strains the dictates of an inspired Muse. I thought of other streams immortalized, and thought that this might by its enchanting beauties give immortality to some future Bard—for it can not forever be “by fame neglected and unknown to song” and “creep inglorious like a vulgar stream.”

Harrisburg is laid out on the west side of this bayou just below its junction with Bray’s bayou—it is yet in the woods consisting of 6 or 8 houses scatteringly situated—the timber consisting principally of tall pine and oaks so excludes the prairie breezes as to render the Summer’s heat almost intolerable, but this can be the case but for a short time—being situated at the head of navigation

without any local cause for unhealthiness and surrounded by a vast quantity of timber which in this country must prove immensely valuable there is only wanted a population a little more dense and a few capitalists of enterprise and energy to render it one of the most important towns in the colony—here then we safely landed on friday the 4th. January 1828—we pass the winter in a small log pen our fire in one corner—have a great deal of rain for five or six weeks—no snow and very little frost—in all as to weather the most delightful winter I ever lived through. Shoulder our axes and build a fine large warehouse with a shed dining room—move across Bray's bayou into it—now feel ourselves comfortable—sitting in our own house—the work of our own hands and as the N. Western winds blow cool and chill encircling a large log heap at evening hour as a band of youthful brothers and as the spiral flames dispelled the gloom of night, so would we feel our cares our Secret griefs dissipated by the genial influence of social converse. "Home! sweet Home! receptacle of each fond tender tie that binds us to existence" this would be our theme. The winter passed away without the melioration of gentle woman's converse—there are it is true several married women—but these are seemingly of as rough a mould as their uncultivated and disagreeably rustic partners there are but two unmarried females in the quarter, to me altogether, unpossessed of the *winning* graces of which their sex is so Susceptible. Several evenings the Doctr and myself made efforts to soothe "the savage breasts" with "concord of sweet sounds," but we found but little or no "music in their souls" By the middle of March have about two acres of ground cleared and planted in cane corn beans and a variety of garden vegetables purchase a couple of houses and cut large timber for another—tear down those standing and construct with the whole a raft, consisting of four houses with board and stuff sufficient to roof them—collect our farming utensils kitchen furniture bedding etc and prepare for a voyage of 30 miles on a raft to the mouth of the San Jacinto at Hunter's Point—our league—Dr. Patrick myself and cook Frank compose the crew—first day's sail 1 mile—next day 2 by working hard at the oars frequently against wind and tide—second night endure a thunder storm—very heavy rain—cold and wet through—walking the raft a great part of the night—body ill at east—but mind solacing itself in far distant lands.

I go ashore and kill two fine fat turkies—catch a fish weighing about 20 lbs—live well while these last—fourth day we have sunk so that half our deck is under water—meet a canoe bound for Harrisburg send word for speedy assistance—same day meet the Schr. Pomona from Orleans for the same Port Send further intelligence of our *distress*.

Sunday—floating along. Sun beaming down upon us with almost intolerable violence land—our dog discovers a large rattle snake in the high grass—set fire to it—the wind rises and very soon the prairie for a considerable distance is one conflagration forming a truly appalling spectacle! in about half an hour great numbers of crows daws hawks and other carnivorous birds are hovering over this scene of destruction ready to devour the various animals found, ready roasted—a large alligator swims close up to the raft lands among the rushes—attacks our dog which escapes—fire two guns at him without any other effect than to drive him off—the fifth night after a day of toilsome labours land and lie down to rest—about midnight are roused by human voices—are boarded by Capt. Lindsay and Edward who had left Harrisburg that same evening at 8 o'clock and paddled a canoe 19 miles our whole distance in a voyage of five days—by this time our whole raft is under water except the two ends where boards were piled next day by hard labour against a strong wind reach the San Jacinto—1 mile from where we were overtaken—at this place is kept a ferry by Mr. Lynch—very hospitable and kind Yankees¹ acquaintances of Mr. Loring of Cin: here the surrounding country is very flat and void of timber immediately on the waters—we make our raft fast to a drifted tree and get into a yawl make for the landing and go to cooking supper—a heavy S. E. gale springs up—the tide rises several feet in a very short time and carries away our raft waves are rolling 3 or 4 ft in height—we all 5 in number man our boat and come up with the raft driving rapidly before the wind we jump on board waves dashing 2 or 3 feet over it a number of our logs are torn loose—are unable to get her ashore—our oars become unmanageable but one—are driven into old river—succeed in getting her behind a

¹Perhaps the writer of the diary is thinking of Mr. and Mrs. Lynch. Cf. p. 57, below.

small point—by this time it is dark twilight—drive up close to an island of water flags. Lindsay and myself with the cable in hand jump in to the boat make to the flags—thinking to leap on dry ground I spring out am up to the middle in water a deep mud bottom thick set with rushes—am followed by Lindsay—drag our boat but find no diminution of depth—have some apprehensions of alligators—seen here from 10 to 12 ft in length—run a pole into the mud and make fast—get on board again—beds and utensils in the meanwhile put into the yawl by the balance of the crew—here we lay tossing all night in continual expectation of our raft going to pieces—toward midnight the whole heavens are wrapt in darkness—never did I witness so awful a scene—the thunder rolled and the forked lightnings glaring through the gloom made “night hideous”—thick “darkness visible”—the cloud burst over us—but already drenched we scarce heeded the descending torrents—about break of day the wind veered round to the N. west—then the billows struck us if aught more furiously—we knew this would soon blow out the tide and unless we escape soon our labours would be all lost to work we went with poles our raft which drew about $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft water dragging over the mud lifted and dropper alternately by the waves—almost despairing to get her out we redoubled our exertions Capn. Lindsay falls overboard—the sudden immersion into the cold water angrily dashing around him nearly proved fatal to him I reach him my pole and he gets aboard and to work again we get round the point in a shattered condition and reach the San Jacinto—wind and tide fair we construct a sail and pass on without breakfast or change of raiment. I should have mentioned that after being *cast away* and making the harbour above—we felt nearly exhausted and wanted our suppers—from which we had been so unfortunately driven about 1 mile. I agreed for one to venture the winds darkness and the tide after it—poor Patrick who was nearly spent and sick with fatigue—agreed to go as steersman—leaving Lindsay and Edwd. to watch I and Frank manned the oars—after turning the point and meeting the full force of wind and tide—we pulled our utmost for 10 minutes or more without any apparent gain—but persevering we got under the opposite shore and reached the goal of our wishes—taking a hearty glass and full rations we loaded and embarked again taking our faithful dog along who had

trustfully watched over the provisions during our absence—to continue—we past on prosperously down the San Jacinto for about five miles when we struck on a bar two or three jumping overboard to their necks and the balance with poles we get off—our sail still up we pass briskly down we enter a small bay at the river's mouth about 1 mile in breadth and several in length—here the wind having greater Scope a Strong current and tide setting out and the waves rolling higher than any we have yet passed through we are apprehensive of two dangers—the one of being dashed to pieces—the other of being carried out into the broad expanse of the Trinity Bay—however not yet daunted we succeed by means of our sail and oars in reaching our destined port an hour before sun-set after a voyage of one week precisely from Harrisburg, we landed at Hunter's Point about the last of March—and many an hour's talk and lively jest has this voyage afforded us—young men who had thought themselves *brought up*; thus to find that they in fact had “come down on a raft”—it was no small matter for lively reflection and humourous sallies on the comparative merits of past and present situations—our descriptions were to father rare food for merriment. Father and Gregg who had traveled down by land meet us on the beech—we accompany them up to Doctr. Hunter's and spend the night

Turn to making improvements get our houses out of the water—establish ourselves in a small cabin about 10 ft square open all around admitting a free circulation of sea breezes—continue here about six weeks during which time we are hard labourers living on coarse fair and subject to many inconveniences—we clear off about an acre of woods and briers—fence in about two acres plough dig and plant it—in corn potatoes and garden vegetables—and finish putting up and roofing a fine warehouse

The Rights of Man arrives. Gregg and Patrick return to Harrisburg. Lyndsey and I remain a few days longer—here I receive my first letters from the States four at once—am quite another person Such joys come not oft to gild the darksome days of the wayworn traveller One evening about an hour before sunset the Capt. and I load a small canoe with our little household matters fix up a sail take our dog Gunner aboard and set out for Harrisburg—we had not more than half crossed the little bay before spoken of before a stiff southerly breeze springs—the white caps

begin to foam angrily around us and once pitched over the bow of our frail little bark. I had command of helm and sail Captn. sitting in the bow—breeze driving us along so as to create some apprehensions lose my steering oar—fortunately find another in the boat—night overtakes us—the breeze still brisk and lively—see some swan and a flamingo—the most beautiful of birds that float on water—deer also on the little islands that beautify the lovely San Jacinto—driving on at the rate of six knots—we several times narrowly escape shipwreck upon snags and sawyers reach Mr. Lynch's a little after his supper having sailed 10 miles—they are very kind Mrs. Lynch is quite a respectable and amiable woman—she and her husband came to this country in the same vessel with my unfortunate and lamented brother Nicholas. She spoke of him in the most flattering terms—departed Spirit of an exalted mould I felt it was but a tribute due to thy excellent worth!—next morning before 'tis light we sail—the wind soon falls—and we have to ascend Buffalo bayou by force of paddles—breakfast four miles above at Captn. Hiram's and reach Harrisburg at mid-noon—all well.

Find that Father and Edwd. had started some days previous with a load of goods for Sanfelipe. The Doctr. Captn. myself and cook Frank start with another waggon load for same place about the last of April—which we reach the evening of seed day—distance fifty odd miles—we passed over very little land of productive fertility most of the country being prairie we cross the grand prairie—this prairie abounds with deer and Mustangs or wild horses—it is beautiful to behold their lofty gambols and wild manoeuvres unconstrained and unshackled by the thralldom of Man. The grand prairie is here about 20 miles across its length is said to be from 80 to 100 without a tree and scarce a shrub to obstruct the view—it is all clothed with grass from one to two feet in height the eye in its wanderings is lost for a resting place and returns to the mind nought but the resemblance of a boundless ocean—its billows, the pliant bendings of successive swards before the unbroken blasts—its canopy the same cloudless azure of the skies or dark pavilion of the threatening storm. After passing through pine island, a small cluster of that species of timber the first we reach for a distance of 15 miles and the only watering place for the same distance we journey three miles be-

fore entering the Brazos bottom. This is a low flat black rich soil from five to 6 miles wide well timbered and in many places covered with impassable Cane breaks—the greater part of this bottom is inundated by the overflowings of the Brazos River which happens at an average once in three years. Sometimes two or three years in succession. It is a stream of prodigious rapidity and great depth when full—it is scarce 100 yds in breadth at Sanfelipe from bank to bank. Sanfelipe is situate on the west bank on a high rolling prairie that here runs into the river. It is composed of about 20 houses principally of hewn logs. Col Austin's is quite a commodious and respectable dwelling. This town is centrally situated as the capital of Austin's Colony in latitude $29^{\circ}, 45'$,—long. about $97^{\circ}, 30'$ —there is a great deal of excellent land in its vicinity—much of it unfortunately subject to destructive overflows—it is also a fine stock country—the choice lands tho' for cotton and sugar on this river lie about 20 miles above and commencing perhaps at the same distance below, from them down to the sea board where lies the best land and being on tide much of it, is not inundated. Vessels do not yet approach nearer than within 60 miles of Sanfelipe—but at a small expense can be rendered navigable for small steam vessels the whole distance up 160 miles by water and 80 by land from the sea board. Sanfelipe can not be called a healthy place because of the inundations of country around by the River—this generally takes place in May—another cause is the prevailing South East winds blowing over a large portion of these stagnations must bear with it miasmata sufficient to affect of itself the health of the place. It is thought that these causes may in a great measure be deprived of their baneful effects. There is however very little sickness prevailing this year—many attribute it principally to the great drought which commenced immediately after the overflow and still continues—notwithstanding these natural causes so powerfully operative against the colonial planter, there is more than one individual on this *Mississippi of Texas*, as the Brazos may be well termed if small things may be compared with great, who will turn out more than 100 bales of cotton and sugar cane proportionally—it is thought there will be a sufficiency of sugar made this year to supply both Colonies—Austin's and De Witt's—tho' in the former alone the census of last Spring makes a total of 3000 souls

There are several planters already engaged in erecting sugar mills and they have resolved to dispose of it at 10 cts this is cheaper than it can be sold at here by purchasers and shippers from N. Orleans. Many have their cotton gins in operation and the establishment of a cotton factory is already agitated. Here also is raised some of the fattest and most delicious beef and bacon in the world at no expense nor trouble, the grass of the prairies and mast of the bottoms makes it all. Salt is made abundantly and sold remarkably low and the waters abound with the finest fish, oysters, crabs turtles etc—the forests with Buffalo deer bear etcetera. The Society of Sanfelipe is fast improving. The laws are becoming better known and more rigidly enforced and the Colony fast disgorging itself of that corruption and moral depravity so prevalent in the first establishment of colonial communities. The colonists have no fixed code of Laws as yet—their legal proceedings are regulated after the common and municipal laws of the United States of N. A. what statutory provisions they have hitherto recd. from Saltillo, Capital of the State of Coahuila and Texas, are modelled after the Civil or old Roman Laws—it being a constitutional provision there shall be no other Courts than Courts military and ecclesiastical—this is bringing into practice here the Code of Louisiana. The young Society of Sanfelipe consists of two or three married ladies young and old 3 or four widows young and old, two or three young ladies—these compose the first class or *higher circle* and very respectable and measurably interesting folks they are; from amongst whom as the head of the *Ton* I would name Mrs. Long—widow of Genl. Long, shot in the City of Mexico six or eight years since—a short sketch of this lady must suffice for them all. In person, she is tall forming what is called a beautiful figure, presenting the conformation of a delicate female endued with the energies of masculine vigour yet moving with a grace that is truly and wholly feminine—her countenance tho' not expressive of the fire of genius nor the striking energies of more than ordinarily effective talents yet is highly interesting—her features are regular—her aspect smiling—her eyes sparking her tongue not too pliant for a female being kept in admirable subjection to her excellent understanding—almost ever pouring forth the vivifying humours of her lively spirit and consequently very engaging in all her conversations—as she

will now command all your sympathies in an artless and moving detail of personal privations and sufferings such as the hearer is ready to believe few such frames ever encountered and lived under—now she will fascinate her auditor by the ease and fluency with which she can descant upon general topics—addressed by the beau the fop or gallant, he does not find her out of her *forte*—a gay widow of about 35 she is agreeable where and when and as the manner and disposition of her company requires. She has one daughter—a beautiful little girl of about 12 or 13. Mrs. Long is now residing with her brother in Law—Majr. Calvit at the mouth of the Brazos. The most respectable portion of the male Society consists of about eight or ten—Married, batchelors and young men—four or five of whom are lawyers. Col. Austin is a small spare little old batchelor without any remarkable intellectual qualifications, of rather a dry and reserved disposition tho' possessed of excellent common sense and considerable general information; altogether well qualified to be the founder of a Colony.

Mr. Gregg withdraws from the Co. and connects himself with some connexions of his on the Guadalupe. We purchase thirty odd beaves and make preparations all of us except Andw. who remains at Harrisburg to drive them to San Antonio market—are prevented by the rise of the Brazos from crossing them. I volunteer to return to the mouth of the San Jacinto for necessary articles that had been neglected. Young Eaton from Chillicothe Ohio accompanies me as far as Harrisburg. We have a large Bayou to cross—at this time filled by back water from the river and widened 100 yds he plunges in and 30 steps from shore he and his horse become entangled—he swims out and with great difficulty the horse is saved—presently there come up a couple of Spaniards, we construct a small raft of brush etc to bear our saddles baggage etc drive in our horses and swim over. These Spaniards were soldiers of Genl. Teranne's¹ escort—commissioner of the Mexican Republic, to meet at Nachitoches the United States commissioner for the purpose of determining the dividing line between the two Governments. This Genl.'s escort consisted of 35 soldiers—and a number of attendant mechanics and servants—also a botanist and astronomer they were several weeks at San-

¹Terán's.

felipe. The Genl.'s coach was a remarkably curious construction—after the fashion of the capital city—what that fashion is or was can not be understood without a view of the indescribable machine—suffice it to say that the long vista which discovers to the mind's eye the gradual advancement of civilization arts and sciences show'd me the unseemly vehicle standing in its proper place—a splendid specimen of the ingenuity and cunning workmanship of man when the last shades of the dark ages were vanishing from before the dawning of the intellectual world. It was of a prodigious size two or three feet wider than ours—constructed of huge pieces of timber much carved inlaid and plated with silver—the hinder wheels larger than those of Cin.:¹ and those before little superior to that of a wheel-barrow—but to our journey—we travel on wet and cold as night approaches, roads very muddy, drop down in the midst of the Grand Prairie spread our blankets and slumber the night away—next evening reach Harrisburg after a complete soaking from a heavy shower—next day pass on alone—have another bayou to swim—reach the Point—vegetables and peas we had planted, flourishing finely—had a long search thro' the cedar groves after a small pocket book supposed to have been dropped by me, and which for its etc etc was thought invaluable—find it not. Next day Dr. Hunter accompanies me Swim again the Bayou, a large Alligator floating near—a very invigorating circumstance—travel on till we reach the bayou near the Brazos—here we have to raft and swim again—push on a new track thro' the Brazos bottom—darkness overtakes us—never was I in such a dismal place—nothing but a small horse path—the large cane meeting above our heads form one continual arch—the eyes kept mostly closed and body bent forward to force a passage—reached the river almost famished find it swollen to an unusual height and far extending over the lowlands. by means of a canoe the ferryman takes us to his little hut surrounded by water—gives us some supper—in the morning enter Sanfelipe having rode 160 miles

About the middle of June the river has fallen and the bottom becomes passable Captn. Lindsay Dr Patrick and hirelings cross over to collect our beeves—weather very hot and oppressive—great difficulty in driving cattle thro' the bottoms—get

¹Cincinnati.

but a few over at one time—the others escaping and getting back. I am taken down with the fever—company return for the cattle Edward in company—they drive them 20 miles up the river to cross—my fever continues have Shakes or chills—am visited by Mrs. Calvit and Mrs. Long in our Hall of Batchelors—my feelings for such kindness were indescribable—the first females I had seen from the first attack—am considerably restored by it and in a few days after walking about—cattle are most of them bro't over. In course of a week I set out with the Captn. to hunt the remainder we get lost in the bottom finally get out—discover the cattle—set out again and in one day ride 50 miles thro' the scorching, treeless prairies—and two days in the dismal wilds of the Brazos bottom at length get all our cattle over the river Dr. Patrick has a slight attack and recovers—about the 1st of July my dear brother E—and I are attacked with the fever brot. on by our extreme exposures and fatigues—on the 5th Lyndsay and Patrick start with the cattle for San Antonio—on the 4th July a great ball is given about 20 miles off—made up by subscription of the colonists in honour of that day so glorious for what they still feel to be *their Country*—my dear brother and I lying lonely side by side on our cheerless palates none but father with us—on the night of the 5th I receive a letter dated 7th April it were vain to attempt an expression of its effects situated as we were—two days after I am able to ride about and gather strength very rapidly—am able to attend on brother—he is able to ride a little morning and evening—thursday evening he called at Mrs. Wilkin's—presented Miss Jane with a couple of sheets of favorite songs—friday morning 11th he rides about 1 mile to a Spring and back—falls on his palate quite exhausted—for several days previous to this in my solitary rides over the prairies—I seemed to have a presentiment that his death was near at hand—the thought was ever in my mind—had he complained of suffering and audibly mourned his afflictions—I should have felt more easy—but no, no like the solemn stillness that precedes the tempest—so did he seem to be awaiting the dissolution of soul and body—the patience of the Christian—the pious resignation of the believer being beautifully exemplified in and throughout his last series of afflictions—his fever continued rising till about the middle of the day—father and I sat by him—he could not speak without the greatest pain—

father asked him where he felt most pain—with broken catches he answered “throughout—my—whole—system.” Shortly after he became somewhat delirious—got up and walked into a room for water—lead him back—he sat up—I sat behind him and supported him for awhile on my breast in an agony of sorrow—father groaned aloud as he contemplated us. I laid him down—he complained of a great pain in his limbs—rose up and sat again—looked at father and exclaimed—“the lambs ought to be gathered.” I was sensible at the time that his rational powers were affected by the fever, yet was this exclamation to me a consoling indication of what but a short time previous had been the joyous tenor of his thoughts. Dr. Nuckols arrives—attempts to stimulate, but the hand of Death was already on him—father and I both called on him—he became roused—we asked him—did he know the Dr.—from the manner in which he turned his head and looked upon him I was satisfied he was perfectly sensible—father and I had hold of his hands—he then turned his eyes on his beloved father for a few minutes—then turned them on me with a feeble farewell pressure of his cold hands—withdraw his eyes—fixed them on the heavens and in a few minutes we perceived that he breathed no more. Farewell! Edward, thou most dutiful and affectionate of sons; thou tenderest of brothers—truest of friends—most guileless of the children of men—short were the wanderings of thy pilgrimage, but they were toilsome mingled with sorrows—leading from the home of thy kindred—thou hadst no mother, no Sister, no gentle voice of womankind to smooth thy passage to the tomb, but thou hadst the tenderest of fathers the most affectionate of brothers. O, Edward thou hadst Him who sticketh closer than a brother—so that we rejoice in believing that, tho’ thou hast fallen asleep in a far distant land—far from “the scenes of thy Juvenile days”—one of a little community budding in the wilderness—, “thy last days were thy best days.” “Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his!”

He died on Friday evening about an hour and half before Sunset. Saturday evening was buried attended by all the citizens male and female who had had an opportunity of knowing how to appreciate his merits and who with one sentiment of respect paid this last mournful tribute to the worth and memory of the amiable the youthful stranger. Sunday I write the melancholy circum-

stances to my dear, only brother. Father and I commence boarding at Mr. Whiteside's—in a few days father takes sick—he took my hand and with tearful eyes said—"I fear we have been here too long"—what a volume did these few words speak to my soul! upon which a deadly apathy had seemed to have siezed. I did not weep I did not speak—but stood alone like a blasted trunk already stripped of its branches braving the thunderbolts heedless of the storm—with the attention of the Dr. and timely use of restoratives he is stirring about in a week's time. Isack B. Desha is lying in the house at same time sick and a prisoner—he had been apprehended some weeks previous for the murder of a Mr. Early from Ohio whom he followed to this country for his money they land on our league at the mouth of the San Jacinto last spring when we were at work there—they then came on to San Felipe where they remained till we arrived Desha called himself Parker. He and Early then started alone for San Antonio—at Gonzales (90 miles from San Felipe) Desha was alone—staid a few days there and went on to San Antonio—returned to San Felipe sick—told different tales as to Early and was shortly after apprehended. On the 23rd father is able to ride about sunset same day we start for San Antonio—father with a brace of pistols and I with a rifle leading a pack mule—we travel by moonlight till one o'clock and lay down in the prairie till morning about mid-day reach Judge Cumming's on the Colorado—father is quite exhausted and overcome by the excessive heat of the sun remain here till next day. Judge has a fine young orchard of peach trees—peaches just ripening—has a rich and valuable farm prairie; and bottom land finely timbered. Start again—cross the Colorado—this is another rapid stream somewhat less than the Brazos—and very seldom overflowing its banks—it is a much shorter river than the Brazos and the country much healthier—we put up at Mr. Beeson's—this part of the Colorado is about 25 miles from the Brazos and becoming quite populous as well as the last named stream it has a grist mill on it and the frame of a saw mill—meet with a large company of Tonkaway Indians at Beeson's—a friendly small tribe. Journey on thro prairie land five miles to Scull creek—so called from a murder there committed 6 or 7 years since—find no water a dismal savage looking place—turn my head around and see an Indian with his rifle close up behind

father—tell him of it he turns round and salutes him find him to be a Tonkaway hunter—he soon strikes off into the woods and we pass on through a country thinly covered with post oak find no water till we have travelled 17 miles from Beeson's—this is the first branch of the Navidad (nativity) here we unpack, turn out our horses, strike up a fire cook our breakfast and dinner—rest about 3 hours—start again cross the main branch of the Navidad, a small branch at this distance from the gulph into which it empties—good timber on it—continue on through a post oak country, soil generally thin and sandy tho' well clothed with grass, reach the main branch of the rio La Vaca (cow river) this is also a mere branch and forms the western boundary of Austin's colony—the dividing line between him and Dewitt cross it and ascend a high and extensive prairie—the view here is almost boundless the breeze is strong, bracing and delightfully exhilarating. Father fancied he could almost taste its sweetness—the eye is charmed with the loveliness and grandeur of the prospect that here so opens on it—the deer and wild horses playing before us—the latter more especially with arched necks lofty heads their manes and tails given to the winds the regularity of their movements with a sudden wheel like thought and the wild terror issuing from their nostrils—all tending to remind us of Job's war horse “clothed in thunder and swallowing up the ground” these give an animation and lively zest to the scenery that makes the whole superior far to description—these prairies are interspersed with what are termed islands of timber charmingly variegating and destroying what would otherwise be a monotony of undulations in the prairie—we cross a second branch of the last named stream—a mile further and we camp at the third fork—we lie under a large tree with a fine fire—the wolves keeping a terrific howling around us throughout the night—this is the principal Indian range—many have been robbed of money and horses—in the morning have a strong pot of Coffee and start—this day travel thro' the loveliest country I have ever seen—the greatest stretch of my imagination never pictured a scene to be compared with this we cross a 4th and fifth branch of the La Vaca—the last of which stands in deep pools of the purest sweetest clearest water I ever beheld I stood on the bank and on the clean white rock about 10 ft below the surface I could have seen a pin—these pools

are full of trout and sunfish—it is a most pleasing and grateful thing to contemplate them throwing in little matter to them and seeing them darting about thro the amber-like fluid—art has had nothing to do here Nature seems to have chosen this region for her own fanciful pleasure works.

After passing this last branch of the La Vaca we ascend a very high prairie the scenery here as much surpassed the former day's as that did any I had before seen. I will not attempt to describe but only say that there are in Cin: about half a dozen young persons ladies and gentlemen whom I then wished with me—they are lovers of the sublime and the beautiful and with such—how delightful would have been the pictures of that day, as they seemed freshly touched by the inimitable hand of Nature we ride on about 9 miles through this high prairie land when we enter post oak roads which continue on to Gonzales on the rio Guadalupe we arrive at Peach creek within 8 miles of Gonzales here we find 6 or 7 men from San Felipe come to this place purposely to search for the bones of Early. Our Compy. had found part of his clothes in said creek as they passed on—we stop and get coffee and venison—these men had found a scull bone but nothing more we saddle up and go on over a stony piece of ground for several miles then thro' a most lovely post oak woods open green with long grass and abounding with deer—by sunset reach Gonzales—find Captn. Lindsay and Dr. Patrick lying prostrate with raging fevers—they had been there in that situation nearly a week—the Captn. was lying on a scaffold in a little arbor of trees the Doctr. on the loft of a miserable hut burning up with the sun and fever.—father continues with them a couple of days—is much recruited and starts on with a traveller after the cattle—which a few days previous had been driven on by Mr. Gregg and hirelings. I remain to nurse the sick. Doctr. more particularly becomes fearfully alarmed—after two weeks—Mr. Urban's goods come on—we get the Captn. into one waggon—the Dr. is sufficiently recovered to ride on horseback in Co. with the waggons I start—have a wild animal to ride a pack to manage and the sick to attend to—but the fatigues the exposures—privations of natural rest that I was compelled to undergo—is past—and will not be attempted here in detail—we were seven days from Gonzales to San Antonio—distance 76 miles—the Country between those two places is prin-

cipally a wild Sandy broken woodland country indifferently watered, commencing with the Guadalupe—a narrow but deep and rapid stream—of great length and pure limpid waters. Gonzales stands on its banks—the Capital of Dewitt's Colony composed of 6 or 7 log pens—two leagues westward of the Guadalupe runs De Witt's western boundary line—making the whole Colony between 40 and 50 miles in breadth and 100 in length running down to within 10 leagues of the sea coast—it contains a great deal of beautiful country—high rolling and healthy tho but a comparatively small portion is of great fertility. On the river St. Marks, which empties into the Guadalupe 3 miles above Gonzales there are many great mill seats the water power being very great—this Colony contains but few settlers nor can it be expected to flourish under its present Empresario—Col. De Witt. This man has been raised among the pioneers of the western states—is well acquainted with Indian manners customs and modes of warfare—his has ever been an unrestrained life with regard to morals and religion—his situations have necessarily exposed and as it were compelled him to class and associate with those bold independent and but too loose and dissipated tho' brave and dauntless Sons of Liberty—introductors of civilization. Yet has the Col. been much in refined society—his education is considerable and his natural powers of intellect strong and vigorous—sufficiently so to render him well qualified for his station—but alas dissipation [and] neglectful indolence have destroyed his energies and are rendering in a great measure abortive the efforts of his colonizing assistants—he is tho' much of a gentleman and like his most excellent Lady is very kind and hospitable to Strangers. To our journey—we come to no more streams till we reach the Sewully¹ (Buffalo river) fifty miles from the Guadalupe—what water lies between is only that which is found standing in deep holes formed by drains or sluices by which the superabundant waters are carried off in rainy seasons—these holes are 12—13 and 16 miles apart,—and between the two last named rivers the country is high and mostly sandy and thinly wooded—there is one stretch of 8 or 9 miles which seems to be one immense hill of the finest unmixed sand. I could compare our march thro' it to noth-

¹Cibola.

ing but a slow journeying thro' a deep dry frosty snow—tho' widely differing in several respects—the excessive labour and fatigue to our animals—and the suffocating heat—it was early in Augt. we travelled along here—these Summer skies are unclouded—and the Sun's powerfully reflected heat was preserved unchanged in temperature by the stunted growth of post oak, black Jack and Hickory, that stands low bushy but thinly over this great scorching sand bank. I really think the burning wastes of Africa would be but little more intolerable to the thirsty traveller, were it not for the grassy verdure which I found to my astonishment every where growing in luxurious bunches out of this seemingly sterile unproductive portion of the earth—these bunches spring up at distances of 1—2 and 4 ft so that when the eye is placed near to the earth the whole country seems one compact surface of the most beautiful green—we were nearly a whole day getting thro' this *fluid earth*, admitting the term, for the sake of *expression*. It was in this dreary region I feared we should have to bury Capt. Lindsay—and such were the Dr.'s apprehensions would be his own fate—here also and every additional day seemed to prove to me that my own constitution had undergone a radical revolution—for notwithstanding my weakness at Gonzales and labours daily and nightly—my copious perspirations, I seemed daily and almost hourly to strengthen and even to fatten—these causes tho' much more lightly operative ever produced contrary effects in the summer seasons in the more northern latitudes where I resided—upon the whole, as a result—I really feel myself already acclimated tho' not yet wedded to Texas

We lie two days at the Seawully¹—this Stream has but little water in the Summer or dry seasons its valley extends to a considerable distance on each side—is rich in soil and no doubt a healthy country—it is entirely unsettled My patients experience a change greatly for the better—I take the Dr. into the river, in the height of his fever and give him a complete bathing—Start on again—meet some of the drivers of our cattle from St. Antonio—inform us of Mr. Gregg's extremely low state and that on the banks of the Seawully they expected to dig his grave—from this stream on about 10 miles we pass over a lovely country abound-

¹Cibola.

ing with deer bear mustang etc—we then traverse a barren broken country for five or six miles, when we enter upon what is here called Musquite prairie—this is a very thin soil producing a short delicate nutritious grass—the Musquite tree seems to be a species of the honey locust, bearing a resemblance in the leaf and producing a long delicate thorn—also a sweet pod, in shape like that of the small black-eyed pea—the trunk and growth of the branches are more after the form and appearance of the peach—and indeed at a distance the whole prairie or country seems like one immense peach orchard—now on the decline having outlived Earth's giant race who strode over this region dropping a seed at every 10-yard-stride. The first appearance of this tree in travelling westward from the States is at Peach Creek near Gonzales—we cross the Salou¹ a small stream within five miles of San Antonio—Musquite prairie continues the earth here is covered with small smooth grey flint stones from an ounce to two or three pounds in size—the land is ascending for a couple of miles when we are on an exceeding high country—two miles further and we come to a Spanish fort and magazine commenced some years since and left unfinished—this stands on the summit of the circular ridge within one mile of San Antonio commanding a view of the town and the vast plain on which it stands—from this spot San Antonio has a very striking resemblance to one of Uncle Sam's handsomest and largest country villages—the curious traveller feels stimulated to urge on his jaded steed satisfied from this *first blush* that he shall be transported with a nearer view of its proportions its lofty domes—its elegant simplicity and natural beauties—he hurriedly descends the eminence in a fever of body and mind—comes to a little canal which he beholds with rapture extending itself abroad o'er the thirsty land and watering beautifully verdant and flourishing fields of corn—enters a regular avenue of huge cotton wood trees—thinks of the grand Avenue leading to U. Sam's house—asks who it was who so slandered this people by saying that they are but little superior to the lowest grade of the human family—surely the labour and utility of these canals—the beauty and taste displayed in the planting of this avenue is a flat contradiction to it all—he passes on—thro' the midst of this friendly shade—on the right stands a massy pile of ruins—for what purpose were

¹Salado.

these stones piled one upon another and why were they thrown down—this he discovers was one of the strong holds of Popish delusion, in which the Royalists in 1810-11 sought refuge from the avenging fury of the Patriots who battered down the mighty walls with their cannon—it is now a garrison—A few yds before him he sees the exceedingly serpentine San Antonio, coming winding around the town and gliding by as if hurried with important despatches to the Gulph of Mexico—he looks with mortification and disgust at the order of architecture which suddenly presents itself on his left he crosses the little river and beholds the same wigwam style of building which constitutes the principal part of the town—he proceeds on finds that the streets intersect each other very irregularly presently enters the public Square this is laid off at right angles being about 150 by 300 yards in the centre of which stands the Church—a large clumsy stone building—that seems to have been standing for Centuries. It has a steeple of the same materials, very well modelled of octagonal form—in this is hung 2 bells kettle-toned and of different sizes—these have their tongues tied with ropes and are made to bellow most horribly by two barbarous boys who stand close by and jirk these engines of torture to the utter dismay and confusion of the astounded stranger perhaps 40 times per diem—this Church has also a skylight dome at the opposite end. In the midst of this Square the traveller stands and contemplates the buildings around him—he had before entering been disgusted with their dwellings that [he] first met—being formed of branches of the Musquite tree set up end ways in all the zigzag varieties of their growth having the interstices daubed with mud—these *hollow squares* are thatched over with the swamp flag and stand ready to receive their inhabitants who carry in a few chests a palate or two and some dried skins and the mansion is furnished. But the public square presents to the strangers eye a more solemn picture each side is formed of one unbroken solid wall except where the streets pass thro’—these walls have doors at neighbourly or family distances opening into what may more properly be termed cells than rooms—as few of them have windows—none indeed have sashes nor is there a pane of glass in the town—they seem more like port holes than windows—having bars like a prison grate; or dark shutters—these walls show no roof above them but seem to stand as we may sup-

pose do the ruins of an earth-shaken or sacked and burnt City after the buildings had been battered down to the last story by a destroying and victorious enemy—these walls are about 18 or 20 ft in height the roof is invisible from the outside—is formed of huge cedar logs as rafters on which are laid small boards—these beams have a descending inclination from the back walls outwardly so as to rest upon the front walls about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft below their height. the roof is then covered with a cement from 8 inches to a foot in thickness from off which the rain is conducted by wooden troughs passing thro' the walls and projecting 3 or 4 ft into the Square. Thro' this square and the heart of the town runs a canal for the purpose of watering the garden lots, as the water by small outlets may be conducted from this to all parts of the place—the traveller hears around him a confusion of unknown tongues, the red natives of the forests in their different guttural dialects—the swarthy Spaniard of a scarce brighter hue—the voluble Frenchman—a small number of the sons of Green Erin—and a goodly few of Uncle Sam's Nephews or half expatriated sons—he feels himself now for the first time in his life a stranger truly in a foreign land and enters a door for a short residence that he may discover something more of this people—but what he has seen we will let him make known in his own proper person. I find that Father has obtained a house and opened his goods. Mr. Gregg is convalescent, tho' like Lyndsay and Patrick continues in a very debilitated state—business tolerably brisk profits moderate—some difficulty in dealing with the Mexicans, not understanding their language—form an acquaintance with two or three families—become some what a favourite with our landlady who has two pretty daughters—accompany them several times to the fandangos—waltzes and reels the principal forms of dance among them—always performed in the streets. Men do not select their partners—this is more gallantly left to the ladies—the former placing themselves in a line on the floor and when the latter arise and face the object of their choice—it sometimes happens that two or more make the same selection and then there is a good deal of elbowing among the fair ones—there are always managers to regulate matters—often solicited but never participate in the intricacies and mazes of their figures—delicacy forms but a small part of female character in San Antonio—their

very language seems almost to forbid the cultivation of this most beautiful of the Graces—unmarried girls are very vigilantly kept from all intercourse whatever with the other sex unless one of the parents be present—soon as married they are scarcely the same creatures—giving the freest indulgence to their naturally gay and enthusiastic dispositions, as if liberated from all moral restraint—The complexion of the native mexican is a shade brighter than that of the aborigines of the country—the men are not generally well formed in feature or person—are extremely ignorant in all the advanced arts of civilization—the majority not being able to read—they are astonishingly expert in the management of horses—not surpassed perhaps by any other people on the Globe. They are completely the slaves of Popish Superstition and despotism—distinguished for their knavery and breach of faith The softer sex are generally handsome in person and regular in feature and of rather a brighter hue than the men eyes black, sparkling, holding most intelligent converse when disposed in the still language of the affections—wear long black hair handsomely adjusted into curls and puffs on public occasions—they are remarkably addicted to dress and Jewelry and on festal occasions appear as richly arrayed as any females I have ever seen—exhibiting no small degree of taste and are certainly among the vainest of their sex. But all this show lasts no longer than till they reach their homes, where they instantly appear as if they might soon be numbered on the Charity list. The Gochapines¹ or European Spaniards that dwell among them are exceptions to these remarks. These are mostly intelligent and wealthy—became acquainted with a daughter of one of them. And often have I regretted my ignorance of their bewitching language. She was of the middle size her person of the finest symmetry—moving through the mazes of the fandango with all the graces that distinguish superiority of person of mind and of soul—her face was perhaps not sufficiently oval to be of that form most admired as the model of beauty—her features were beautiful forming in their combination an expression that fixed the eye of the observer as with a spell—her complexion was of the loveliest—the snowy brightness of her well turned forehead beautifully contrasting with the carnation tints of her cheeks—a

¹*Gachupines.*

succession of smiles were continually sporting around her mouth her pouting cherry lips were irresistible and even when closed seemed to have utterance—her eye—but I have no such language as seemed to be spoken by it else might I tell how dangerous was it to meet its lustre and feel its quick thrilling scrutiny of the heart as tho' the very fire of its expression was conveyed with its beamings. I felt lonely and sad as a stranger in that place and a vision so lovely coming so unexpectedly before me could not fail to awaken tender recollections and altogether make an impression not soon to be forgotten.

The 16th of Sept. the anniversary of the Declaration of Mexican Independence was celebrated with a great deal of order and unanimity and considerable enthusiasm of feeling. A stage was erected in the public Square very much resembling a huge bedstead with a tester and curtains reaching down like drapery to the platform and made fast to the four posts at the tops of which were flying their own National flag that of The United States, of Great Britain and of France—while that of Old Spain formed a carpeting for the stair case ascending to the stage. The Soldiery and citizens both ladies and gentlemen paraded the streets in the afternoon in the evening an oration was delivered from the stage by a Priest—was told it was an excellent and patriotic composition—but I thought badly delivered and apparently with but very little effect on the multitude—a large table was set covered with wines and other liquors, sweetmeats etc "*pro bono publico.*" The Square was then lighted up with lamps and candles and every thing cleared off for the enjoyment of the "dearly loved fandango" five or six setts at it at once.—never before did I witness so large a collection of such happy beings. Thus passed off their day of Independence

Continue to be myself "chief cook and bottle washer" for our company of Invalids in San Antonio—have some amusements in teaching the girls A. B. C—and learning their language with them—old lady no longer afraid to trust them to my discretion—have opportunities of witnessing their manner of living. Every family has in the yard an oven built in form of a cone solely for the purpose of roasting the heads legs and tails of animals—on such occasions all the connexion round, are invited, skins are spread on the earth—when these delicacies are thrown down in

the centre of the waiting circles, and every one that is fortunate enough to have a knife makes a lively use of it till the whole head is fairly demolished and as many of the legs as can be possibly crowded after it. When they have to pay for their meat in market a very little is made to suffice a family—it is generally cut into a kind of hash with nearly as many peppers as there are pieces of meat—this is all stewed together. The way in which they obtain their bread is worthy of notice. They raise only Indian corn—this is soaked in lime or ley till the rind of the grain is taken off—it is then ground on a concave stone about 12 inches wide and 20 in length with legs cut to it 6 or 8 inches long—the hinder being somewhat longest so as to give the stone an inclination from the body of the grinder—a handful of corn is laid on this and masticated with another stone resembling a roller but cut so as to fit the concavity—this operation is always performed by the women, and in a kneeling posture—they generally go over it a third time—if they wish to treat their friends with very white bread the whole family gather round the pot of corn and grain by grain bite off the little black speck at the end of the germ—when the dough is already¹ a small portion at a time is taken and patted in the hands till thin as a flannel cake—this cake making operation is always accompanied with tunes and words that seem peculiarly to chime in with the patting ceremony—it reminded me very much of our tuneful ladies in a *finery starching* scene. These cakes are baked on sheet iron and when eaten hot with butter or gravy are very palatable—but soon get tough—they answer the natives for spoons with which they all dip into the same dish of meat and peppers prepared as above—one spoon not lasting longer than to supply with two mouthfuls when a new one is made use of. Very few families are supplied with the common necessary kitchen and household utensils—not even with chairs—sitting on skins spread upon the earthen floors of their dwelling—thus live the commonality throughout the northern provinces of Mexico.

The population of San Antonio is differently estimated from three to five thousand—they must rapidly improve with their increasing intercourse with the Americans. There is kept up here a garrison of three or four hundred soldiers for the defence of the

¹All ready.

place against the Indians but more particularly that very powerful tribe the Cumanches who are supposed to be 6 or 7,000 warriors strong and are continually at war with the Mexicans in some one part of the Province of Texas. Saw about 20 or 30 of this tribe, who came in to trade—they are fine looking men—and the largest in frame considered collectively, I ever saw—are remarkably proud and overbearing toward the Mexicans whom they heartily despise. Always on horseback in their travels and warfare—are expert horsemen—use the bow the lance and the shield not having many firearms among them—their mode of attack is generally by arranging the lances in front, the guns in the center and bows in the rear—their horses at full speed accompanied with the fury and yellings of demons—they are among the bravest and most warlike of the Mexican tribes—friendly in their disposition toward Americans and dreading the deadly rifle. The Lipans¹ are a branch of the Cumanches and the next most formidable tribe in Texas. These two tribes range from the Brazos River to the Rio Grande and the mountainous country south of Santa Fee but are rarely known to molest American traders in those countries. Have abundance of figs peaches and melons here—very little attention paid to the cultivation of fruits tho' it is a climate very congenial to most of tropical productions—fall from a grape tree very seriously hurt—sell off our goods at auction—make arrangements for journeying to the east. Take a ride with Capt'n. Lindsay toward the head of the San Antonio river which rises 6 or 7 miles above the town or rather gushes a full sized river of the lesser magnitude from under one of the immense hills north of the town. We become bewildered among the hills woods and ravines and are disappointed in seeing the romantic spectacle but feel in a measure compensated by witnessing a few miles farther N the most picturesque and pleasing scenes of country that ever gratified our views—immense hills—extensive vales—barren rocks—luxuriance of verdure—deer starting up from before us and bounding over the adjacent landscape—blue mountains towering in the distance, as it were to shut out the view of infinitude—the whole lovely in its original wildness, and most impressively imposing in sublimity. Such is the scenery around San Antonio—forming an immense

¹Lipans.

and complete ampitheatre 6 or 7 miles in diameter, within which nearly the whole plain is a rich and productive soile and may be watered at any time of the year by canals of little expense from the San Antonio river—and certainly there never was a stream better calculated for the purpose of manufacturing machinery—but all is in the possession of a people too ignorant and indolent for enterprize and too poor and *dependent* were they otherwise capacitated. Begin to understand the “common parlance” of the place tolerably well. Landlady and girls most willing to assist me—am asked all about *my country*—how far to it—how many relations I have—what religion they profess—tell them some were Roman Catholics—greatly delighted. By the by this family are pretty strict in the observance of their forms—repetitions of “Our fathers”—“Ave Marias”—“Credos” etc for indeed the religion of this place is understood by very few if any as a gracious affection of the heart and soul but a mere requisition of personal mortification in form of penances etc. Old lady very anxious to know when I would visit her country again—tell her perhaps in two or three years—informs me by that time her prettiest daughter will be marriageable and wished I would bring her some Jewelry with me—gives me a brass ring with a blue glass sett as a remembrance from her daughter whose delicate fingers at the same time were ornamented with more than one of gold—put it carefully in my pocket however, seemingly much flattered by the *distinguished* compliment.

On the evening of 3rd October leave San Antonio for Sanfelipe on the Brassos. Mr. Gregg having started some days previous with a company Father, Doctr. Patrick, Captn. Lindsay Myself and a traveller forming our Company. As we ascend the hill one mile from town look back and behold the sun taking *his departure* also behind the *western* hills—not a cloud to hinder the *warm* greeting of his farewell beams—the evening was as tranquil and serene as I ever witnessed—our hearts danced within us and our mouths spoke the gladness thereof—not even the great distance the toils and dangers that lay between us and our homes—could lessen the joyousness of our feelings—for we felt for the first time that the slow measured steps of our horses were *now* bearing us *toward* the land we loved best. Camp about 8 miles from town where we overtake a large company with silver and mules for

Louisiana—next day reach the Seawully¹—meet two or three Mexican families moving to San Antonio with a small stock of horses cattle and hogs—they were making a part of their supper from a polecat—which caused a considerable space between their camp and ours these are beautiful little animals to look at and very numerous—tho' too offensive for near approach when they choose to make themselves so. Loose² our horses. See vast numbers of deer in the search after them. When found 'tis very late in the day—do not overtake the drovers till late in the night—in a woody country—tis very dark—discover their fires—come up and prepare our suppers Keep a guard out—about midnight are alarmed by the guard who came in from his post with the report that there were Indians or other persons heard going off at speed through the woods and thought that some of *our* horses were stolen. Captn. and Doctr. are too fatigued to accompany me. I mount a horse kept up for emergencies and after considerable riding discover and get all ours collected—meanwhile great preparations going on at the Camp for a desperate defence of the silver, et cetera,—morning at length arrives—father quite unwell from his exposures to the heavy dew and fatigues through the night—are consequently late starting—nothing particular in this days journey—meet a large drove of beeves ~~for~~ San Antonio market—reach the Guadalupe and enter Gonzales about sunset—propose resting here a day or two—finished a letter to Rebecca and sent it by Mr. Burnet. Several small log habitations erected here since our last visit. With recruited spirits recommence our journey—reach Peach Creek, the dismal scene of Early's murder by Desha. Meet an old hunter who takes us to the spot where he had a few days before found the bones of that unfortunate traveller—they had been very much scattered and some broken by the wolves—he had discovered all but the skull and collected them together for the purpose of exhibiting and then burying them—reach that branch of the La Vaca which forms the dividing line of Austin's and De Witt's Colonies—find a house erecting pitch our camps for the night. Catch some large sunfish from the limpid stream. Camp the second night three miles West of Scull

¹Cibolo.

²Lose.

Creek—hear bear in the night gathering mast from the live-Oak. Next day cross the Colorado and camp near Judge Cumming's—arrive safely at Sanfelipe the day following—friends all well—continue here about one month—meanwhile brother Andw. visits us from Harrisburgh—is considerably recruited in flesh and spirits. Succeed badly in making collections. Father and I about the middle of November start for the mouth of the Brassos to meet a vessel expected from Galveston Bay—not yet arrived—hear of her detention by a Mexican cruiser sent on this coast for the capture of smugglers—become acquainted with the families of Doctor Wells and Mr. Bell—much pleased with them intelligent and amiable people. Father concludes not to return to Cincinnati before the ensuing Spring—but that I should go on soon as the vessel might be prepared to sail. In consequence return immediately to Sanfelipe to make new arrangements (60 miles). Return again with trunk and effects accompanied by Captn. Lindsay—meet with father—proceed southwardly to Brassoria—a town newly laid out on the Brazos about 18 miles direct from the sea coast—on a wide water and well situated to flourish with the population of the country, having an exceedingly rich and extensive fertile country around and excellent schooner navigation—contains 4 or 5 dwellings and a store a duel fought here the day before with rifles—no wood shed. Go on down to Mr. McNeal's¹ within 7 miles of the sea—this is the most intelligent industrious and hospitable family met with in Texas—hold a considerable number of Slaves and cultivate cotton to a pretty large extent—having a large and valuable gin of their own. Family consists of the Father and Mother—five sons, all grown but one, and a lovely daughter of 16—the beauty of the Colony. We continue in this amiable domestic circle 3 or 4 weeks anxiously awaiting the arrival of the vessel—pass off the time very agreeably in viewing the country deer hunting—bee hunting—grape gathering etc etc—get no tidings of the Schooner father and I start once more for Sanfelipe—I having determined to go on by land—reach Mr. Bell's—rainy season commences. Captn. John Austin arrives with a schooner of 60 tons purchased at N. Orleans to trade from the

¹McNeal's.

Colony round the Mexican coast. We journey on through the rain and are two days in travelling to Mr. Brown Austin's¹—a distance that in dry weather when the waters are low may be rode in 4 hours. Monday morning 15th Decr. take an early breakfast and start for Mr. Little's about 30 miles over a very flat sandy prairie country—travel all day thro' bogs quicksands and water—have to lie down on the wet prairie till morning am fatigued and wet to the neck with walking and wading my poney having given out—we suffer from the cold N. W. Decr. blasts, not having materials to keep up a fire—travel on next day striving to head the almost innumerable ravines and creeks which were overflowing their banks and a large portion of the flat country find it impossible to make our point that day—conclude to steer another direction and if possible reach Mr. Huff's on the St. Bernard by night—get into almost impassible bogs—horses can not carry us through—dis-mount and wade through mire and water for miles—father nearly exhausted and myself but little stronger not having had a mouthful to eat since sun rise the day before—get within a mile of Huff's by night—find it impossible to cross Snake Creek it being nearly a quarter of a mile in breadth—deep—full of growing timber vines and floating logs—turn out our horses, strike a fire and camp for the night—toward day commence raining—make a tolerable shelter from it. In the morning attempt to swim my horse through—fail and return and make a raft of logs with which I succeed after an hour of excessive toil in effecting a passage over—have a mile further to walk thro' high grass and heavy rain before reaching the house. Make a voracious meal of corn bread coffee milk and fat bacon having fasted fifty odd hours under constant bodily exertion exposed to wet and cold—got a sufficiency for father and started off again thro' the rain taking a different rout as directed making the distance a mile greater—reach the camp abt. 12 o'clock—find father busy in restoring his fire which the rains had nearly extinguished despite of his efforts—his endurance of personal fatigue and exposure was matter of astonishment to me—he also makes a pretty hearty *break-fast*—we saddle up once more and reach Mr. Huff's—where next day a traveller arrives bearing

¹A brother of Stephen F. Austin.

a letter with information that the expected Schr. Rights-of-Man had entered the Brazos—remain two days here with Father who has pretty well recovered from the effects of our memorable journey—having made our arrangements and plans and received his counsel and blessing we part in the firm persuasion of meeting again the ensuing Spring or Summer where above all earthly places we most delighted to dwell in thought.